

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the specification as follows:

Please amend the paragraph starting on page 22, line 11, as follows:

Thus, when the signal level of the low frequency component $r(i, j)$ which is an input level is in an area lower than a predetermined reference level L_k , the coefficient calculation circuit 11 outputs a contrast correction coefficient $g(i, j)$ of a fixed value g_{max} higher than 1, but when the signal level of the $f(i, j)$ is in another area equal to or higher than the reference level L_k , the coefficient calculation circuit 11 output a contrast correction coefficient $g(i, j)$ which gradually decreases ~~increases~~ to a value g_{min} in response to the signal level of the low frequency component $r(i, j)$.